

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 14, 2005

The President  
The White House  
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. President:

We write in order to urge that you require your Deputy White House Chief of Staff, Karl Rove, to either come forward immediately to explain his role in the Valerie Plame matter or to resign from your Administration.

Notwithstanding whether Mr. Rove intentionally violated the law in leaking information concerning former CIA operative Valerie Plame, we believe it is not tenable to maintain Mr. Rove as one of your most important advisors unless he is willing to explain his central role in using the power and authority of your Administration to disseminate information regarding Ms. Plame and to undermine her husband, Ambassador Joseph Wilson.

We now know that e-mails recently turned over to the prosecutor by Time, Inc. between writer Matthew Cooper and *Time* editors reveal that one of Mr. Cooper's principal sources in the Plame matter was Mr. Rove.<sup>1</sup> This has been confirmed by *Newsweek*, which obtained a copy of an e-mail from Mr. Cooper to a *Time* editor stating that "'it was, [Karl Rove] said, Wilson's wife, who apparently works at the agency on wmd [weapons of mass destruction] issues who authorized the trip'" and not the CIA Director or Vice President.<sup>2</sup> According to the e-mail, Mr. Rove spoke to Mr. Cooper on "'double super secret background'" just three or four days before Robert Novak wrote a column outing Ms. Plame as a CIA operative.<sup>3</sup>

We also know that Mr. Rove told Chris Matthews that Ambassador Wilson's wife and her undercover status were "fair game."<sup>4</sup> A White House source also appears to have previously acknowledged that Mr. Rove contacted Mr. Matthews and other journalists, indicating that "it was reasonable to discuss who sent Wilson to Niger."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Michael Isikoff, *Matt Cooper's Source: What Karl Rove Told Time Magazine's Reporter*, NEWSWEEK, July 18, 2005.

<sup>2</sup>*Id.*

<sup>3</sup>*Id.*; Josh White, *Rove Told Reporter of Plame's Role But Didn't Name Her*, Attorney Says, WASH. POST, July 11, 2005, at A1.

<sup>4</sup>Evan Thomas & Michael Isikoff, *Secrets and Leaks*, NEWSWEEK, Oct. 13, 2003, at 26.

<sup>5</sup>*Id.*

The above facts appear to be directly inconsistent with previous statements by you and representatives of your Administration concerning leaking in general and the Plame case in particular. For example, on September 30, 2003, you stated "there's just too many leaks [in Washington]. And if there is a leak out of my administration, I want to know who it is."<sup>6</sup> You also stated "I want to know the truth. If anybody has got any information inside our administration or outside our administration, it would be helpful if they came forward with the information so we can find out whether or not these allegations are true and get on about the business."<sup>7</sup> On October 10, 2003, White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan was asked if Mr. Rove or two other aides in your Administration had ever discussed the Plame matter with any reporter, and he stated he had spoken to Mr. Rove and the others and "they assured me that they were not involved in this."<sup>8</sup>

Regardless of whether these actions violate the law – including specific laws against the disclosure of classified information<sup>9</sup> as well as broader laws against obstruction of justice,<sup>10</sup> the negligent distribution of defense information,<sup>11</sup> and obligating reporting of press leaks to proper authorities<sup>12</sup> – they seem to reveal a course of conduct designed to threaten and intimidate those who provide information critical of your Administration, such as Ambassador Wilson.

We hope you agree with us that such behavior should never be tolerated by any Administration. While it is acceptable for a private citizen to use every legal tool at his or her disposal to protect himself against legal liability, high-ranking members of your Administration who are involved in any effort to smear a private citizen or to disseminate information regarding

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<sup>6</sup>President George W. Bush, President Discusses Job Creation with Business Leaders (Sept. 30, 2003) (transcript available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/09/20030930-9.html>).

<sup>7</sup>*Id.*

<sup>8</sup>White House Press Secretary Scott McLellan, Press Briefing (Oct. 10, 2003) (transcript available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/10/print/20031010-6.html>).

<sup>9</sup>50 U.S.C. § 421(a).

<sup>10</sup>18 U.S.C. § 1510.

<sup>11</sup>18 U.S.C. § 793.

<sup>12</sup>18 U.S.C. § 793(f).

a CIA operative should be expected to meet a far higher standard of ethical behavior and forthrightness. This is why we believe it is so important that Mr. Rove publicly and fully explain his role in this matter.

Sincerely,

John Longenecker

Diane E. Watson

Sam Fann

Barbara Lee

Bob Seal

Danny K. Davis

Ben A. Wapner

Lynn A. Woolsey

J. John

Bennie L. Thompson

Hilda L. Arlis

John L. ...

Wanda ...

Zoe Loff

Carine Brown

Rail M. ...

Jim ...

Mike ...

Carolyn C. ...

Faith Pulli

Charles B. ...

... ..

Jim Mc Donnell

Max Mankin

Louise Slaughter

Tom Odell

Shafie Wata

Donna F. Brown

Nancy Kaptun

Jed Strickland

Ni

Linda J. Sanchez

Al Smith

Carolyn B. Maloney

Jack E. Sauer

Robert Walsh

Chris Van Holler

Donald P. Payne

Jerry Balch

Martin D. Baker

Arnold Radtke

Robert L. Smith

Debbie Wasserman Schultz

John Lewis

Elaine Cummings

Jan Schakowsky

Karl Holt

Joe L. Sack

Pete Stark

Ernest Brown

John W. Olver

Pete Viscusi

Barry Frank

Anna Wu

Albert R. Boyd

Tom V. Blanton

Hans DeHaven

Bill Delahunt

Al Swift

Wayne H. Kilmer

Jim Moran

Gene Schakowsky

Bob L. Hoon

Sheila Berkley

Chad E. Kildee

Eleanor Tauscher

Guillermo O.

Paul L. Hoon

James D.

Bob Filner

Paul B. Miller

Steve H. Hestings

Robert H. Kline

Hazel Dwyer

John

Gregory McK

Shirley Rothman

James R. Long

John

Sandra N. Lee

Eddie Bernice Johnson

Dan Lee

B. M. H. S. J.

B. M. H. S. J.

Stephanie M. H. S. J.

Grace I. H. S. J.

E. M. H. S. J.

Robert E. H. S. J.

Stephanie M. H. S. J.

David B. H. S. J.

Neil A. H. S. J.

## List of Signers to Rove Letter

- |    |                          |    |                       |
|----|--------------------------|----|-----------------------|
| 1  | John Conyers, Jr.        | 47 | Elijah E. Cummings    |
| 2  | Sheila Jackson Lee       | 48 | Albert R. Wynn        |
| 3  | Diane E. Watson          | 49 | Jan Schakowsky        |
| 4  | Maurice Hinchey          | 50 | Luis V. Gutierrez     |
| 5  | Sam Farr                 | 51 | Rush Holt             |
| 6  | Zoe Lofgren              | 52 | Diana DeGette         |
| 7  | Barbara Lee              | 53 | Loretta Sanchez       |
| 8  | Corrine Brown            | 54 | Bill Delahunt         |
| 9  | Bernard Sanders          | 55 | Pete Stark            |
| 10 | Raul Grijalva            | 56 | Gary Ackerman         |
| 11 | Danny K. Davis           | 57 | Emanuel Cleaver       |
| 12 | Jim McGovern             | 58 | Major R. Owens        |
| 13 | Henry A. Waxman          | 59 | John W. Olver         |
| 14 | Mike Honda               | 60 | Jim Moran             |
| 15 | Lynn Woolsey             | 61 | Pete A. DeFazio       |
| 16 | Carolyn C. Kilpatrick    | 62 | Jesse Jackson Jr.     |
| 17 | Jay Inslee               | 63 | Bobby L. Rush         |
| 18 | Frank Pallone, Jr.       | 64 | Patrick J. Kennedy    |
| 19 | Bennie G. Thompson       | 65 | Shelley Berkley       |
| 20 | Charles B. Rangel        | 66 | Lloyd Doggett         |
| 21 | Hilda Solis              | 67 | Dale E. Kildee        |
| 22 | Michael E. Capuano       | 68 | Jim Cooper            |
| 23 | Jim McDermott            | 69 | Ellen Tauscher        |
| 24 | Adam Smith               | 70 | Cynthia McKinney      |
| 25 | Marty Meehan             | 71 | G K Butterfield       |
| 26 | Carolyn B. Maloney       | 72 | Steven Rothman        |
| 27 | Louise Slaughter         | 73 | Rosa DeLauro          |
| 28 | Jose E. Serrano          | 74 | James R. Langevin     |
| 29 | Tom Udall                | 75 | Xavier Becerra        |
| 30 | Robert Wexler            | 76 | Joseph Crowley        |
| 31 | Maxine Waters            | 77 | Bob Filner            |
| 32 | Chris Van Hollen         | 78 | Sander Levin          |
| 33 | Gwen Moore               | 79 | Kendrick Meek         |
| 34 | Donald M. Payne          | 80 | Eddie Bernice Johnson |
| 35 | Marcy Kaptur             | 81 | Alcee Hastings        |
| 36 | Tammy Baldwin            | 82 | Doris Matsui          |
| 37 | Ted Strickland           | 83 | Bobby Scott           |
| 38 | Martin O. Sabo           | 84 | Ed Markey             |
| 39 | Anthony D. Weiner        | 85 | Brad Sherman          |
| 40 | Jerrold Nadler           | 86 | Robert E. Andrews     |
| 41 | Linda Sanchez            | 87 | Stephanie Tubbs Jones |
| 42 | Melvin L. Watt           | 88 | Nydia M. Velasquez    |
| 43 | Debbie Wasserman Schultz | 89 | Grace Napolitano      |
| 44 | Barney Frank             | 90 | Howard Berman         |
| 45 | John Lewis               | 91 | Neil Abercrombie      |
| 46 | Artur Davis              |    |                       |